



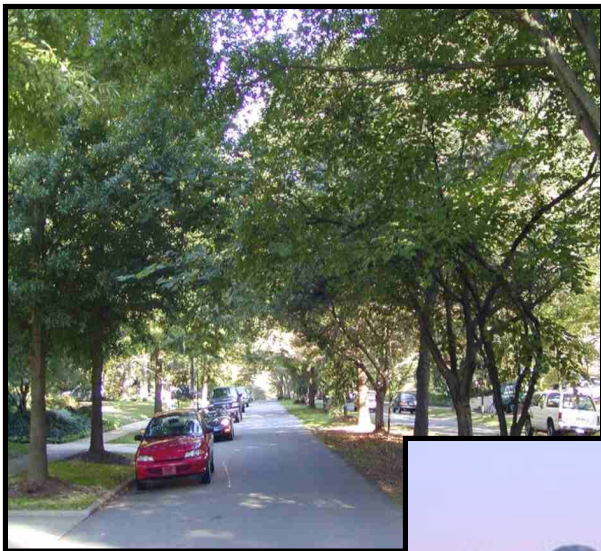
# **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Region Rapid Transit and Land-Use Integration**

**Legislative Committee on Urban Growth and  
Infrastructure**

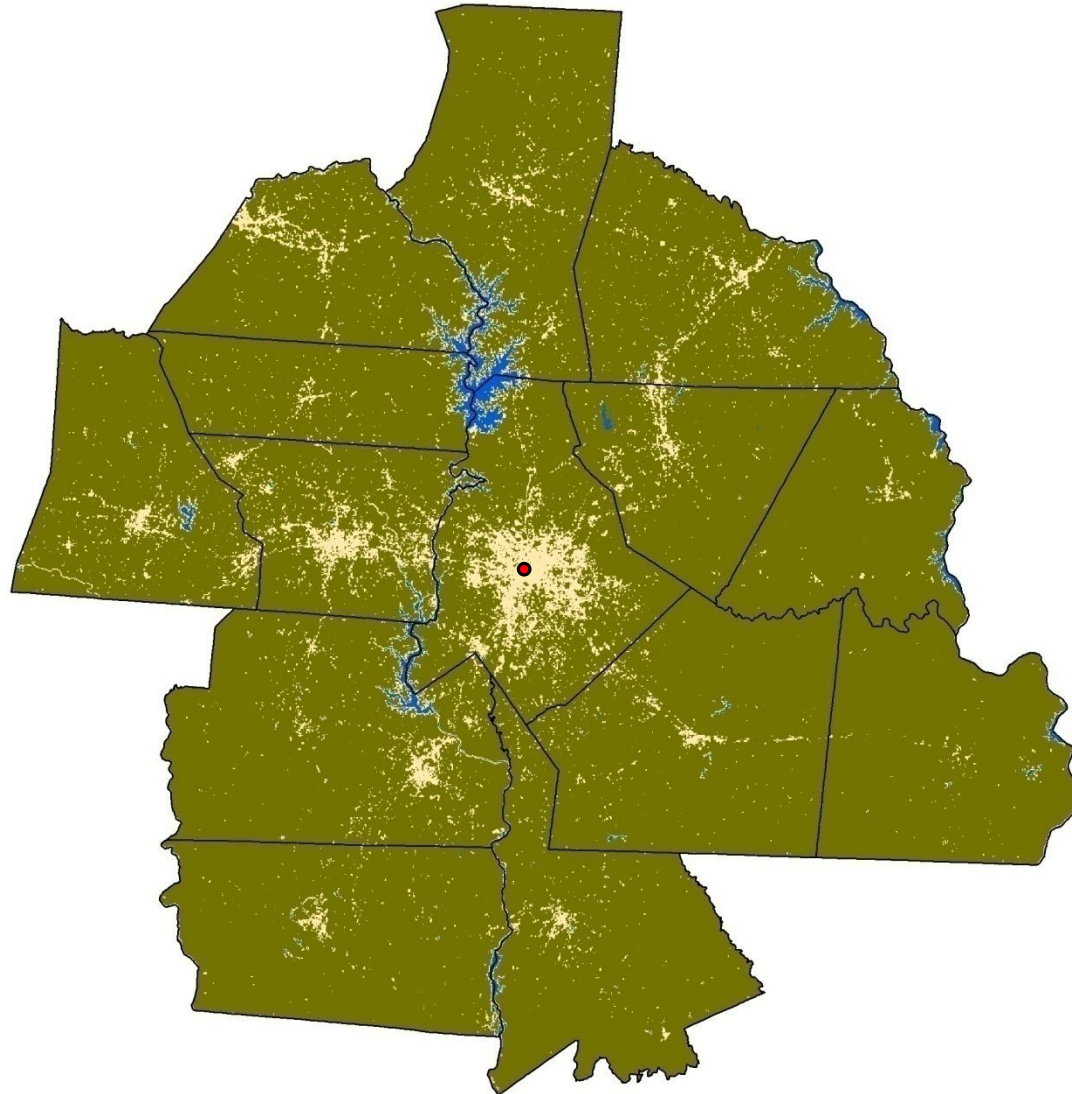
**Carolyn Flowers  
CEO Charlotte Area Transit System  
March 23, 2010**

- Statistics

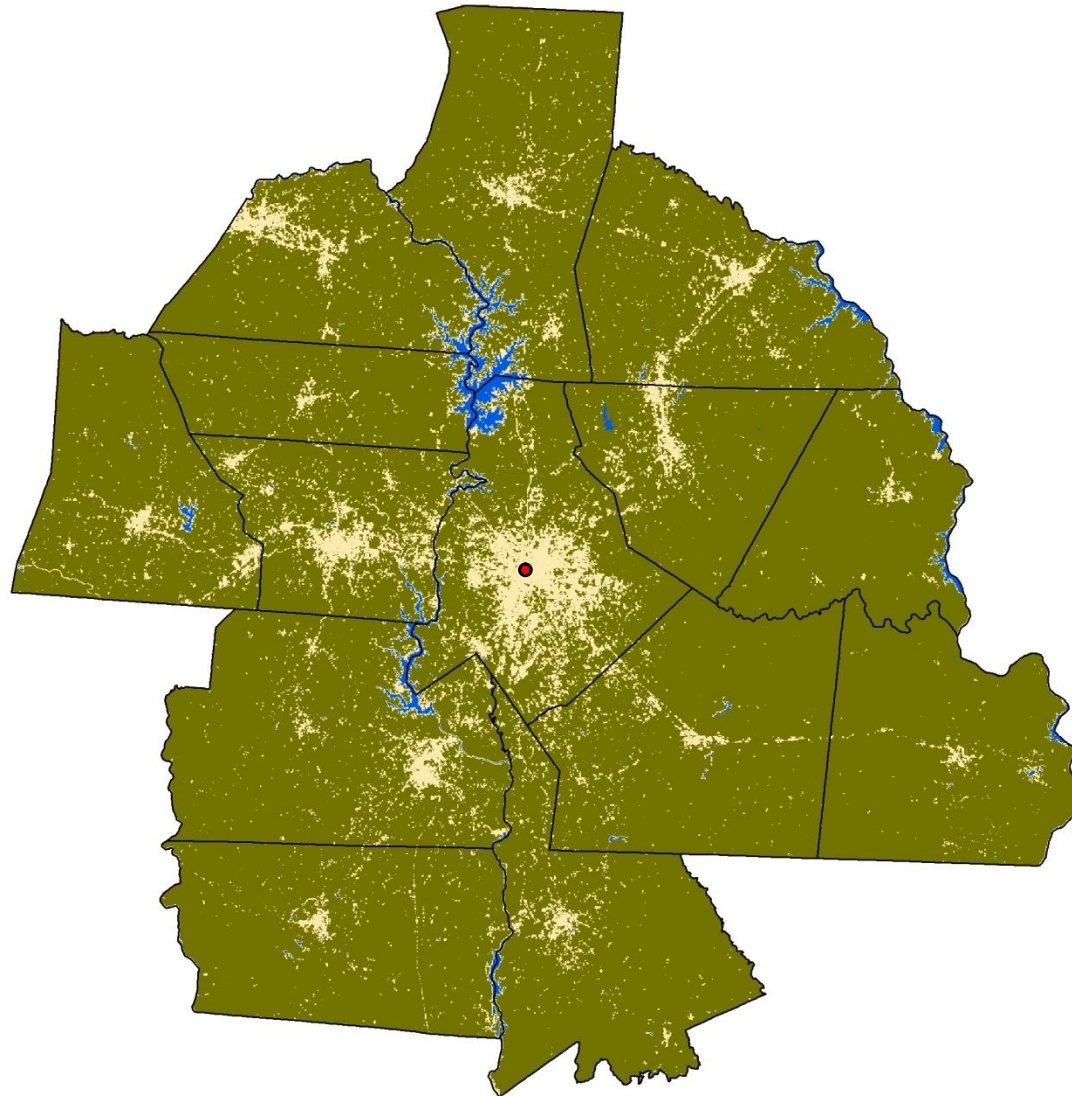
- Mecklenburg County population: 935, 300+
- Metro area population: 1.7 million+
- City square miles: 287
- State population: 18.5%
- Transit (total fleet vehicles): 548
- Rapid transit (rail) miles: 10
- Lane miles (freeway/arterials): 2,180



# Developed Land: 1976



# Developed Land: 1985





# Developed Land: 2006

- Population

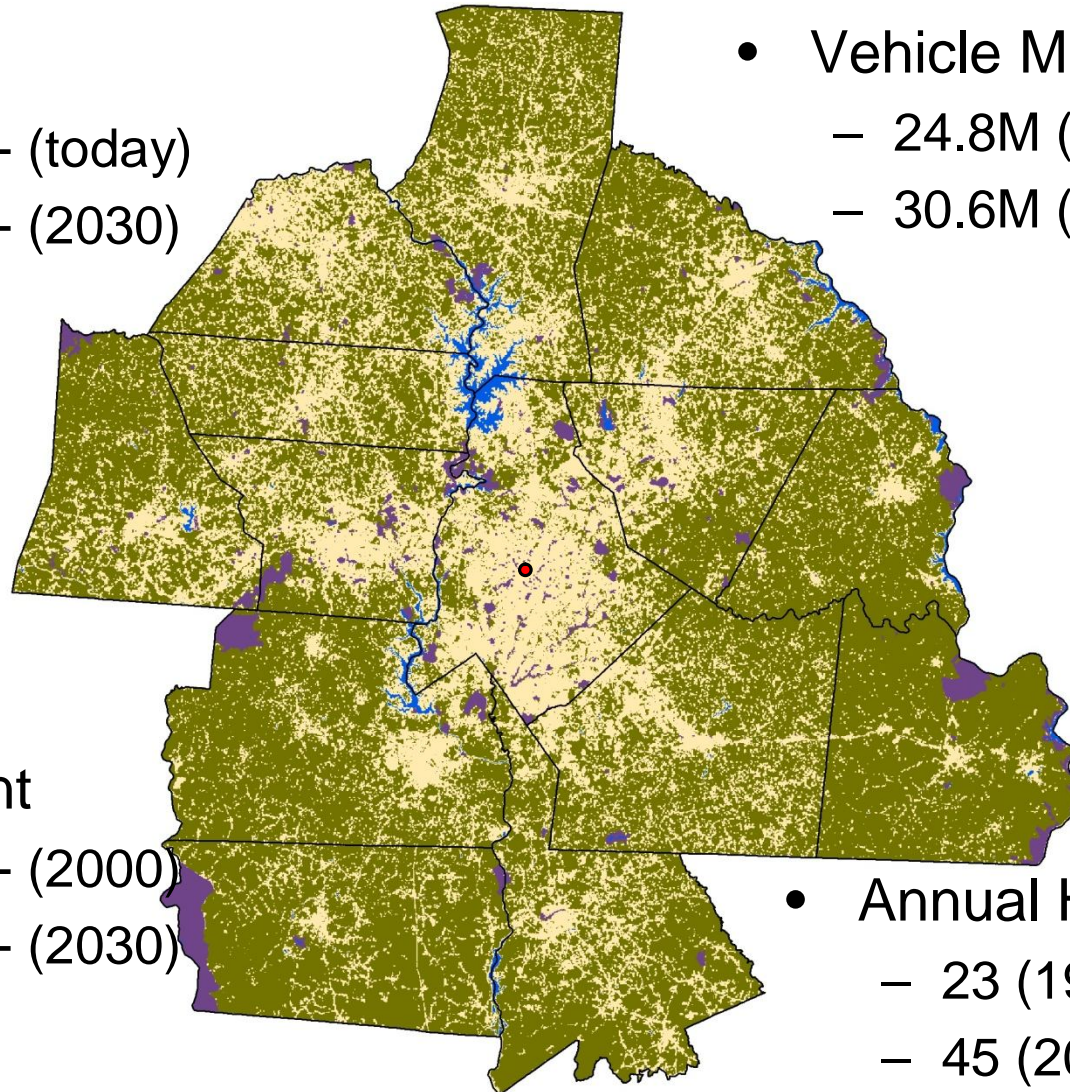
- 630,500+ (today)
- 980,000+ (2030)

- Vehicle Miles Traveled

- 24.8M (2000)
- 30.6M (2007)

- Employment

- 470,000+ (2000)
- 850,000+ (2030)

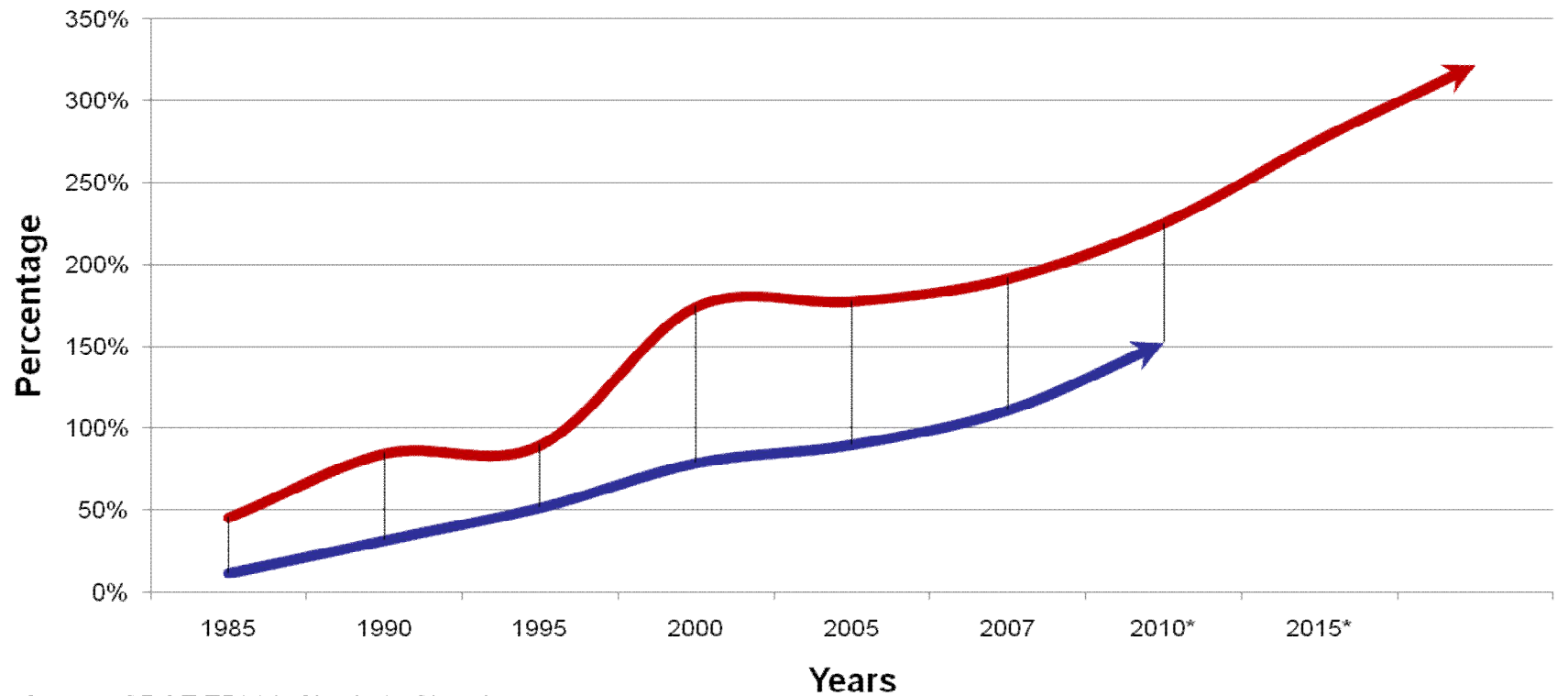


- Annual Hours of Delay

- 23 (1995)
- 45 (2005)

# Rapid Regional Growth

## Vehicle Miles Traveled vs. Population Growth Rates Mecklenburg County



Source: CDOT TDM & Charlotte Chamber

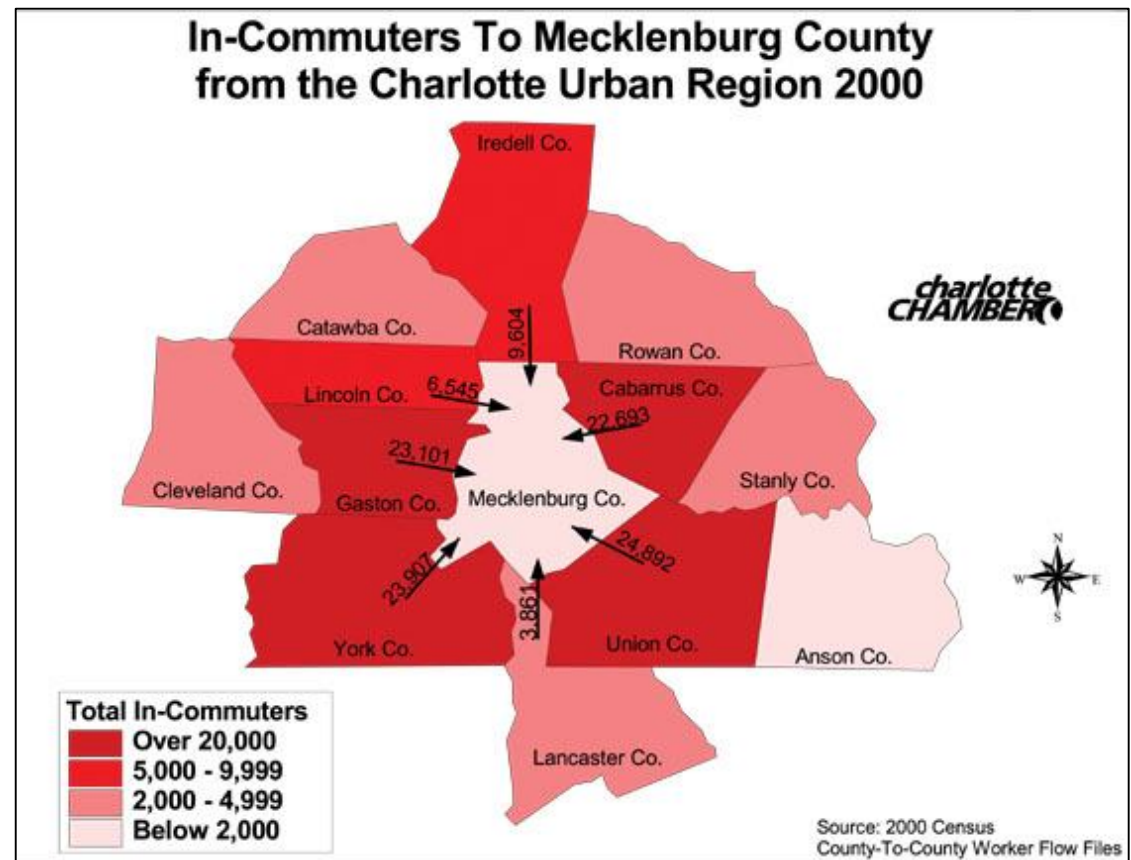
1985 base year

\* estimate

→ VMT Growth → Population Growth

Mecklenburg County is the major employment destination in the region.

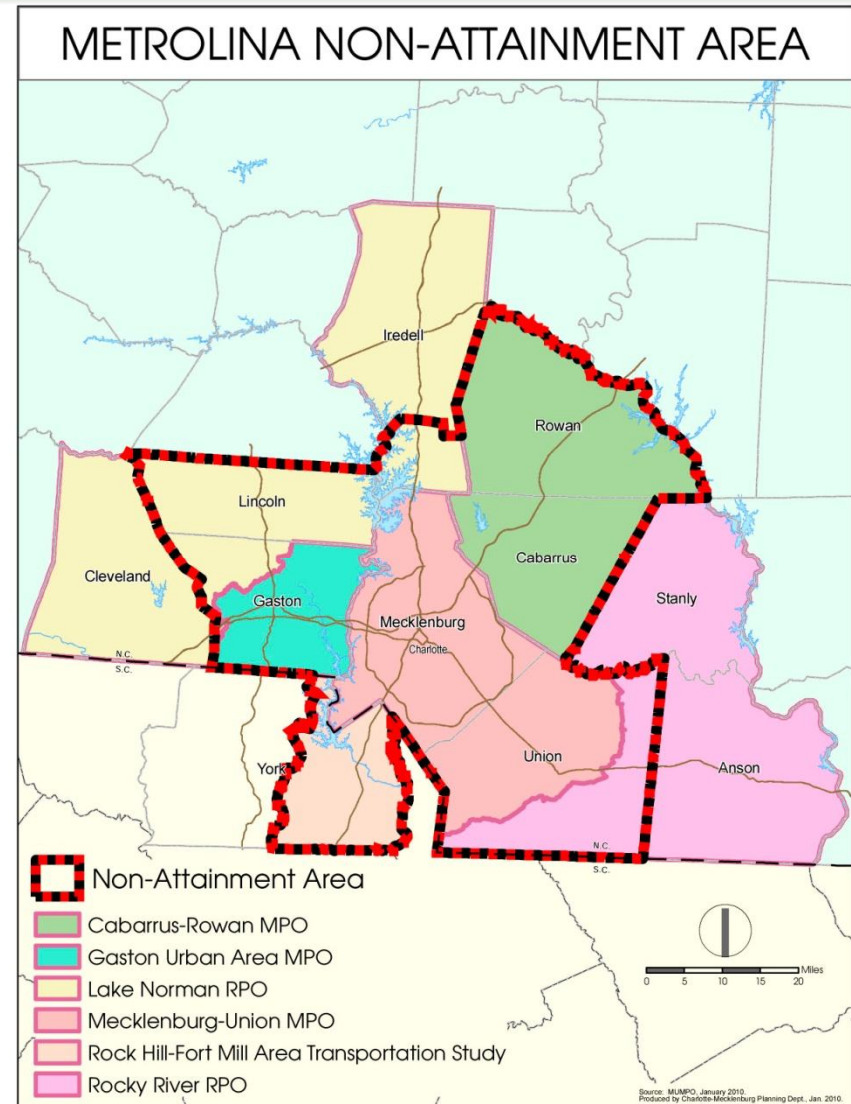
- Over 150,000 people commute to work each day to Mecklenburg county.
- 20% of the region outside of Mecklenburg county work within Mecklenburg county.





## Potential Conformity Lapse

- 9<sup>th</sup> worst metropolitan air quality
- 20+ days/year above 8 hour ozone standard
- Non-attainment designation in 6 North Carolina counties and 1 South Carolina county
- Transit \$'s Affected Same as Highway \$'s
- Lapse would freeze all federal approvals
  - Federal Earmark grants
  - Federal Formula Funds
  - Record of Decision for Blue Line Extension (4/11)





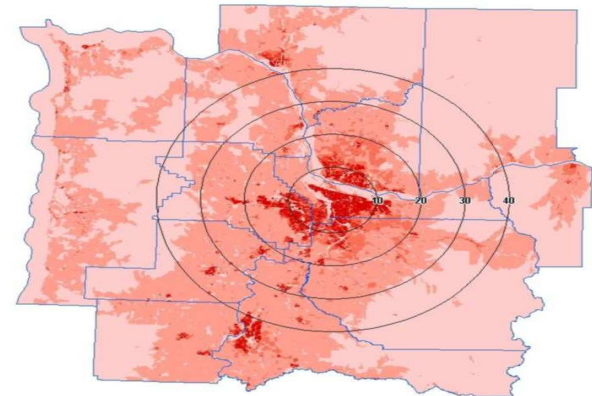
# How to Develop Regionally

In 2000, 40 mile Atlanta's region had just over 4 million residents

In 2000, Portland's 40 mile region had almost 2 million residents.

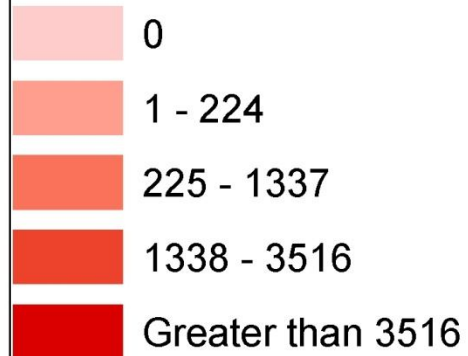
By 2035, Charlotte's 40 mile region will approach 4 million residents, growing from about 2 million .

## Portland, Oregon

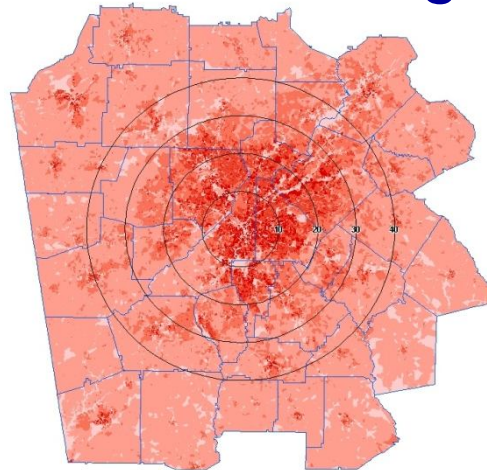


## 2000 Census

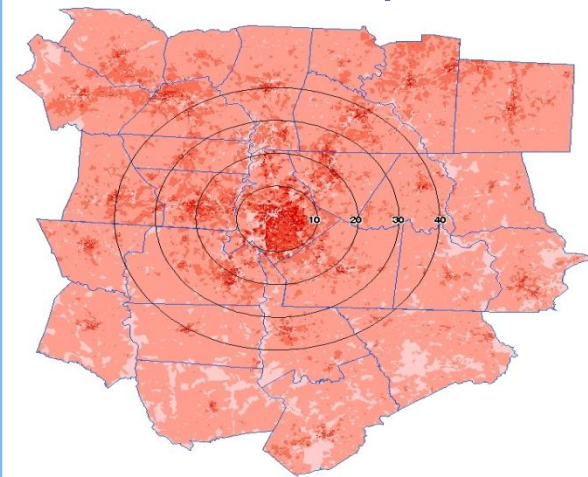
Persons per Sq. Mile



## Atlanta, Georgia



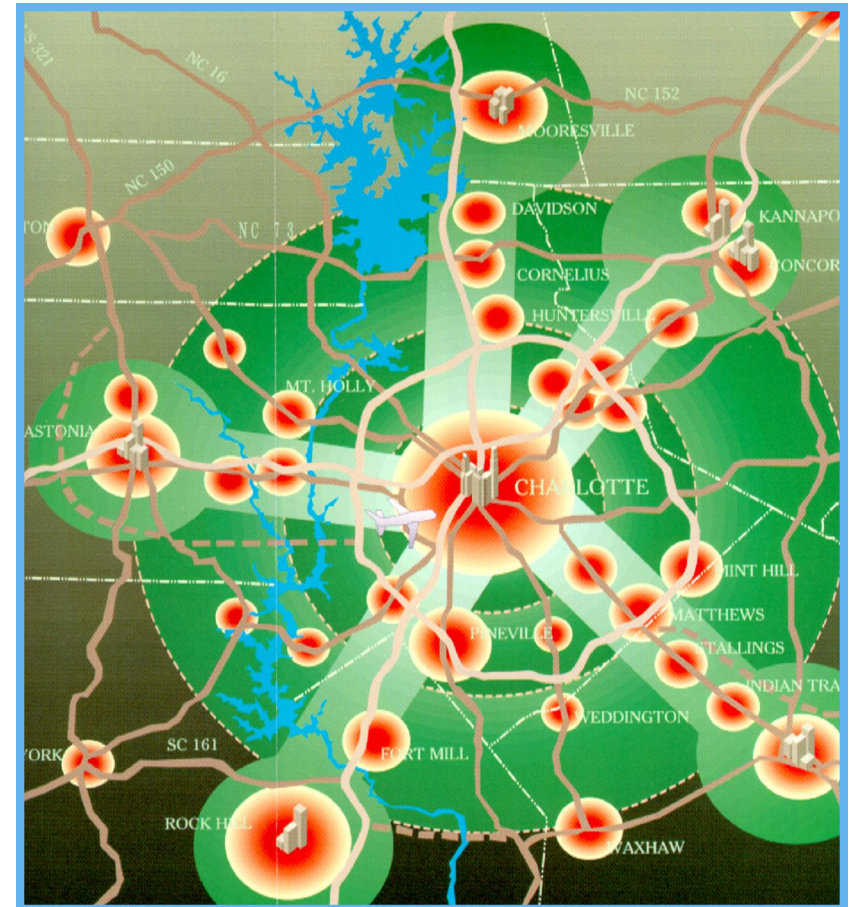
## Charlotte, NC



# 1998 Regional Approach

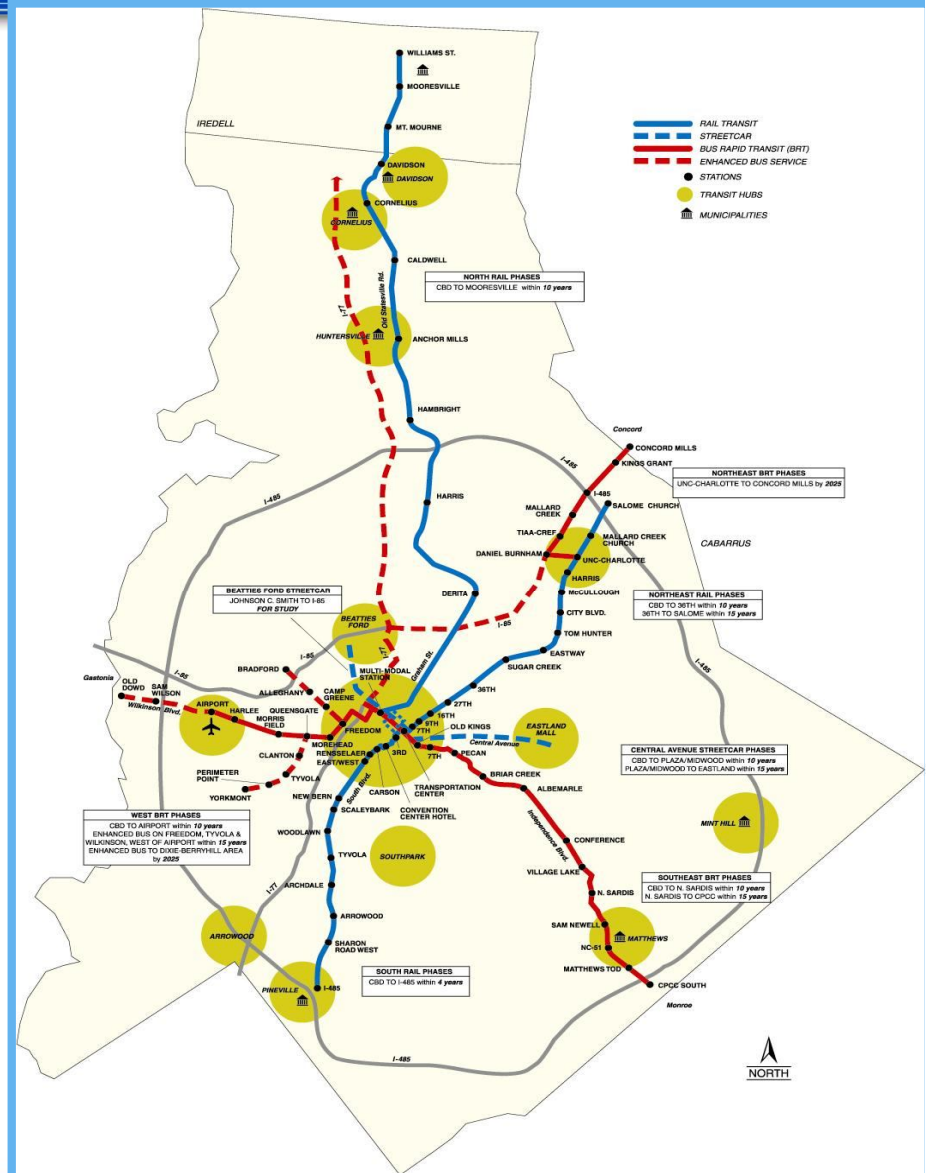
## 2025 Transit / Land Use Plan

- 1998 -- Business and Elected leaders initiated a vision for a long-term growth management strategy for Charlotte-Mecklenburg
- Integrates rapid transit and mixed-used development along 5 transportation corridors
- Expands transit system to serve between the rapid transit corridors
- Provide more transportation choices to meet mobility needs
- Support sustainable growth for region



# Recommended 2025 System Plan

- Serves 205,000 – 215,000 daily transit riders by 2025
- 28 miles of BRT guideway
- 21 miles of LRT
- 11 miles of streetcar
- 29 miles of commuter rail
- Extensive network of bus and other types of transit services throughout the region







# General Assembly Leadership

1997: General Assembly provided enabling legislation for Mecklenburg County citizens to locally fund public transit projects through sales tax revenue.

- ✓ 58% of voters overwhelmingly approved the ½ cent sales tax for public transit in 1998
- ✓ 70% of voters reaffirmed their commitment to funding public transit through sales tax in 2007.





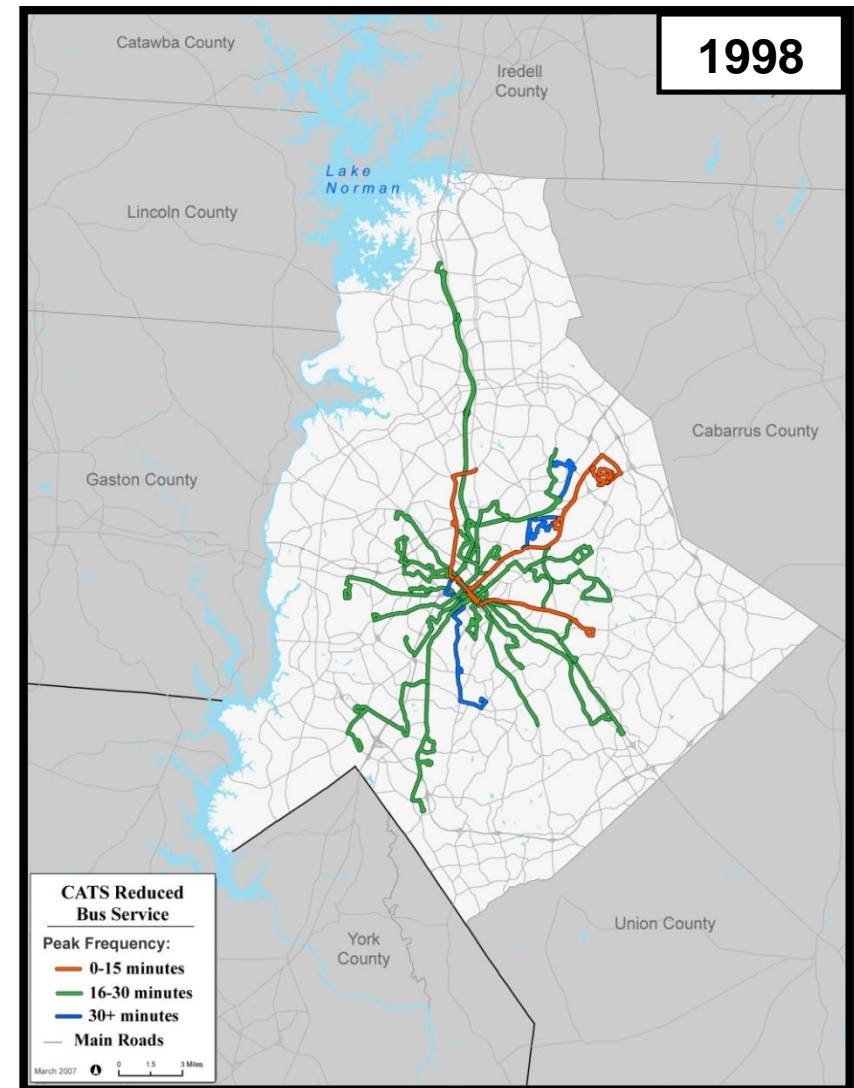
# Metropolitan Transit Commission

- **Public Transit System Governing Board**
  - Provides policy direction for system development and operation
  - Oversees management activities
- **MTC Composition – 23 members**
  - 16 from Mecklenburg County
  - 1 NCDOT
  - 5 ex-officio from 5 surrounding counties
  - 1 SCDOT (ex-officio)
- **Citizen Advisory Committees**
  - CTAG - planning and finances
  - TSAC - service delivery
- **Regional Opt In**
  - Dedicated Funding
  - Enact Land-Use Policies

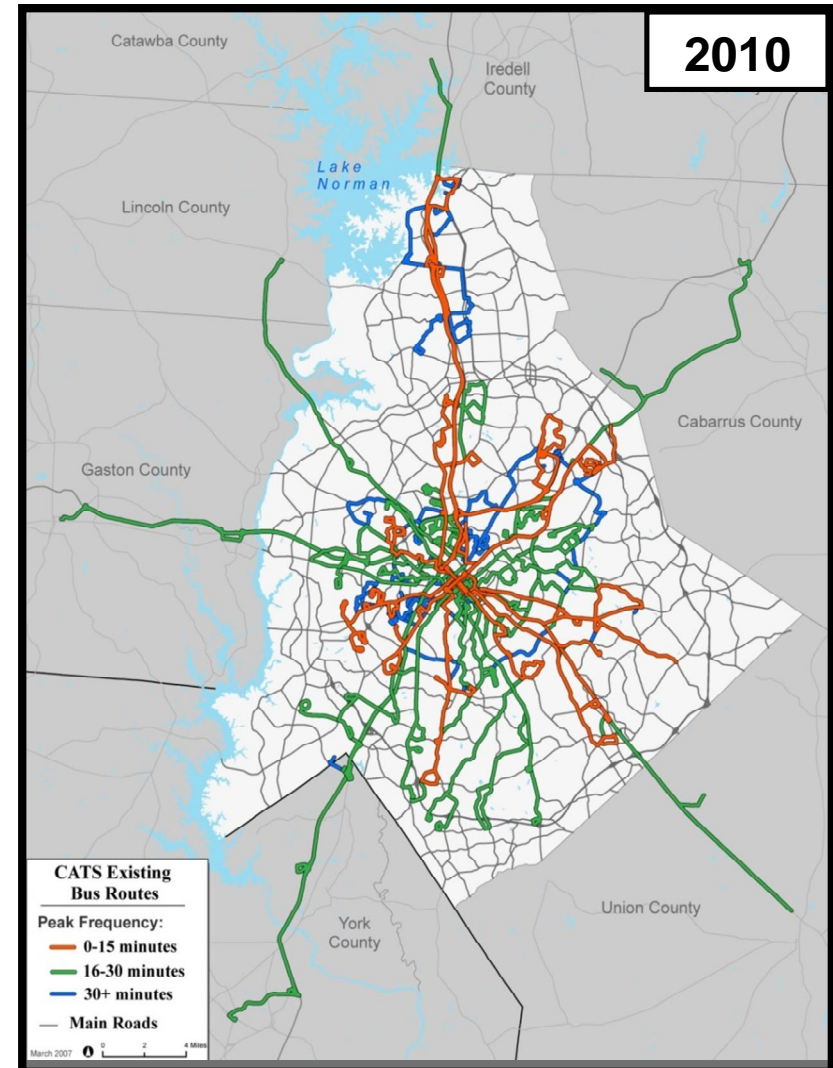


# Prior to Sales Tax

- Basically served Charlotte
- Couple of Express Routes within Mecklenburg County
- Few Neighborhood Circulators
- Few customer amenities
- Limited safety/security investments



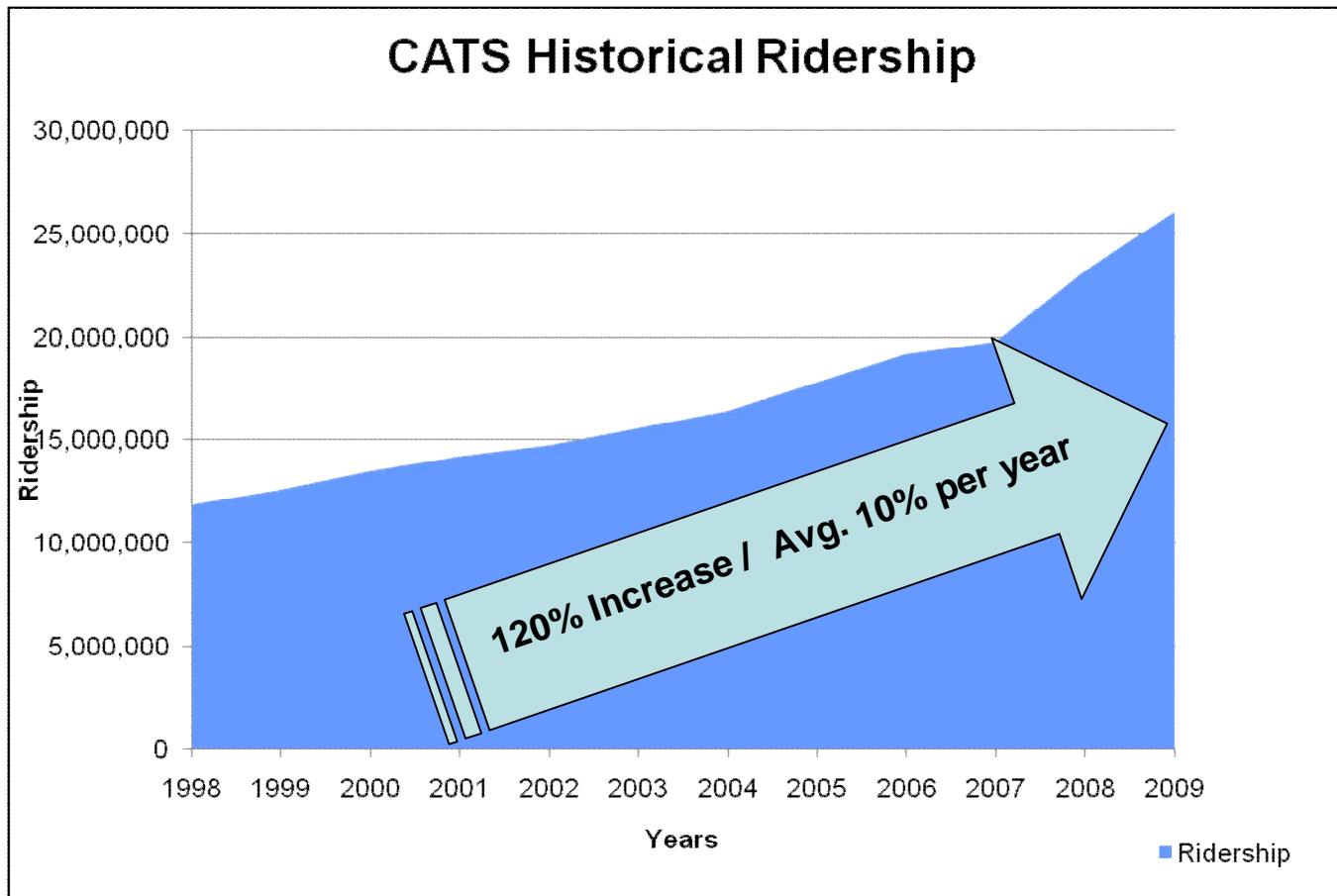
- Expanded service hours
- Greater service frequency
- More routes
- Expanded ADA Service
- Regional expansion
- Light rail service
- Improved safety and reliability





# More and More People Ride

Transit usage up 47% from 2006 – 2008, highest growth rate in nation.\*



\* Source: US Census  
Ridership source CATS



# LYNX Blue Line Success

- Opened November 24, 2007
- 9.6 Miles
- \$462.7 Million
- 15 Stations (7 park and rides)
- Operates 7 days a week,  
5:30 a.m. - 1:30 a.m.
- Service Frequency
  - Rush hour: 10 minutes
  - Non-rush hour: 20 minutes
- Bus/Rail Integration serves Blue Line directly
  - 15 new and modified routes



- Better than expected operations
  - Trains performing well
  - Systems performing well
- Very good safety / security record
  - 1 Preventable accidents
  - Crossing gate damage
  - Minimal vandalism
  - Very few assaults, larcenies, etc.
- Emergency response



# Ridership

- December 2009 Ridership
  - 10 millionth rider
  - Highest increase in U.S.A. (35%)\*
- Average LYNX Weekday Ridership
  - >14,000
  - Exceeds year 1 projection by 40%
- Special Events

\*National Transit Database







# Regional Vision

## Land Use Policies:

- MTC adopted a standard set of land-use guidelines necessary to support rapid transit stations.
  - Promote more compact, pedestrian friendly development
  - Encourage mix of residential, retail, employment and civic developments at or near rapid transit stations.
  - Supports sustainable communities
- Each Mecklenburg jurisdiction with rapid transit plans has adopted land-use policies supporting Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)



# The Ashton East/West Station Area

## Under Construction



- Approx. 3 acres
- 310 Rental Units
- Approx. \$80M
- 120 DUA



# Land Use Development

Before



After



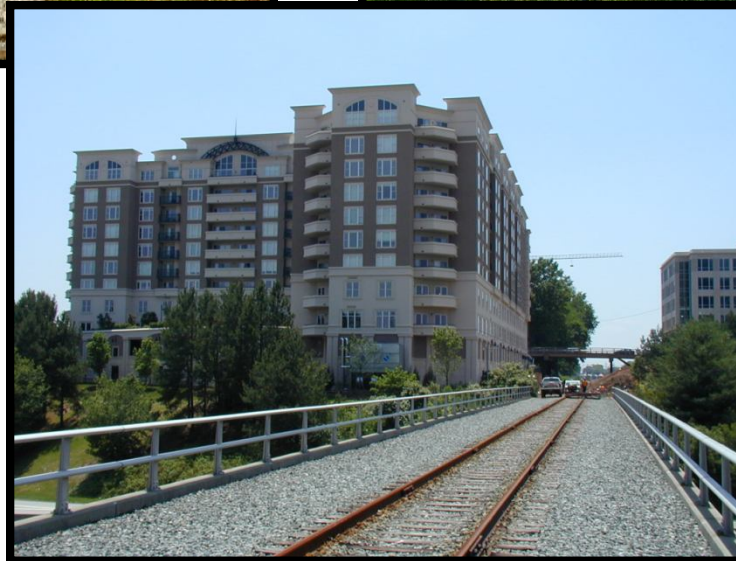
310 units at 120 units per acre at LYNX Blue Line station



# Land Use Development



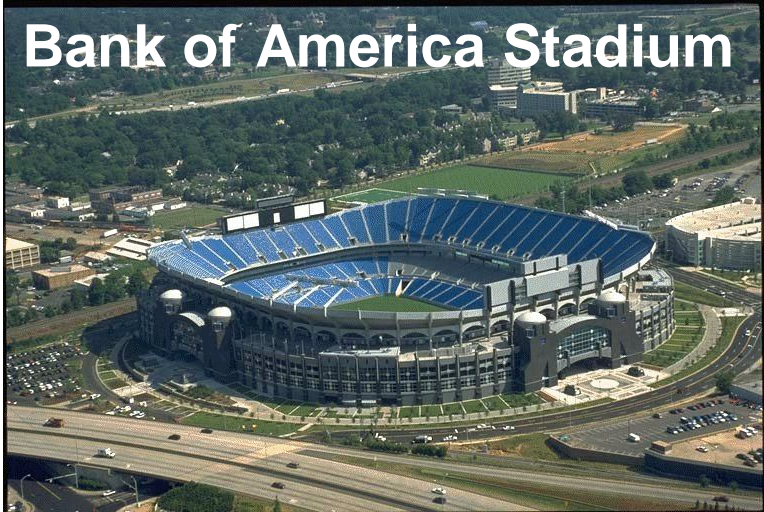
- 266 residential units
- Approximately 70,000 SF office and retail
- Immediately adjacent to rail corridor



- 465 parking spaces
- \$70 million project cost

# Civic Venues

**Bank of America Stadium**



**Time Warner Arena**



Plus,  
Children's Theatre  
Mint Museum  
Discovery Place, etc.

**NASCAR Hall of Fame**







# LYNX Blue Line Development

2005-2011

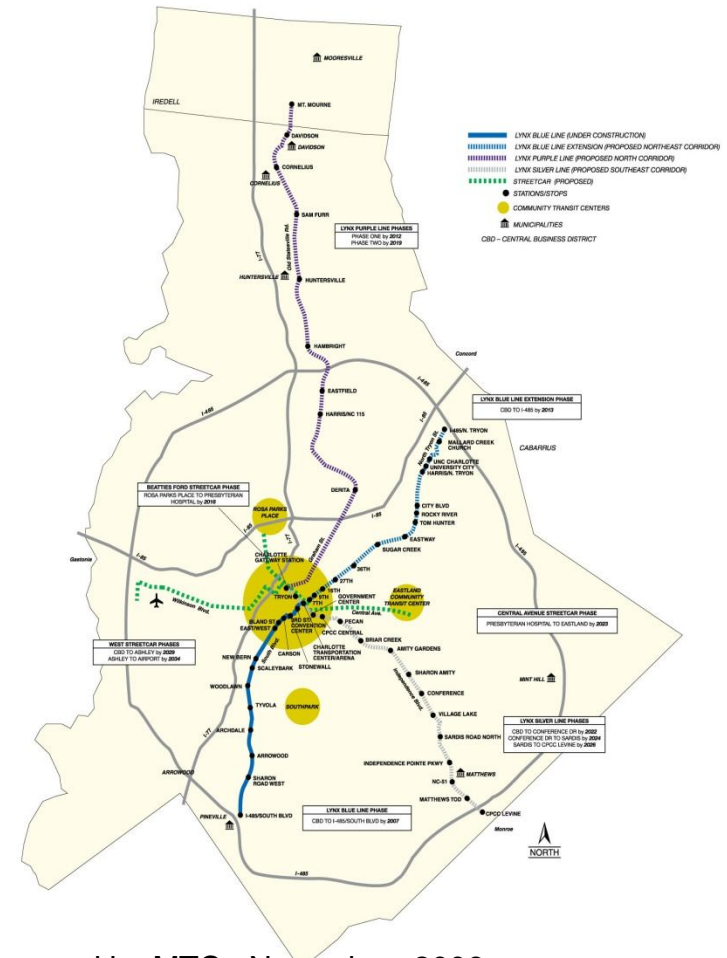
Acres Rezoned for TOD	Housing Units	Affordable Housing	Commercial	Investment
265	7,581	180	627,712 SF	\$1.46B

Development along line through 2015 is estimated to generate \$16 million annually in property tax up from \$6,000,000 in 2003.

Additional tax revenues can be reinvested in police, schools, roads, fire, etc.

# Adopted 2030 Plan (Current Status)

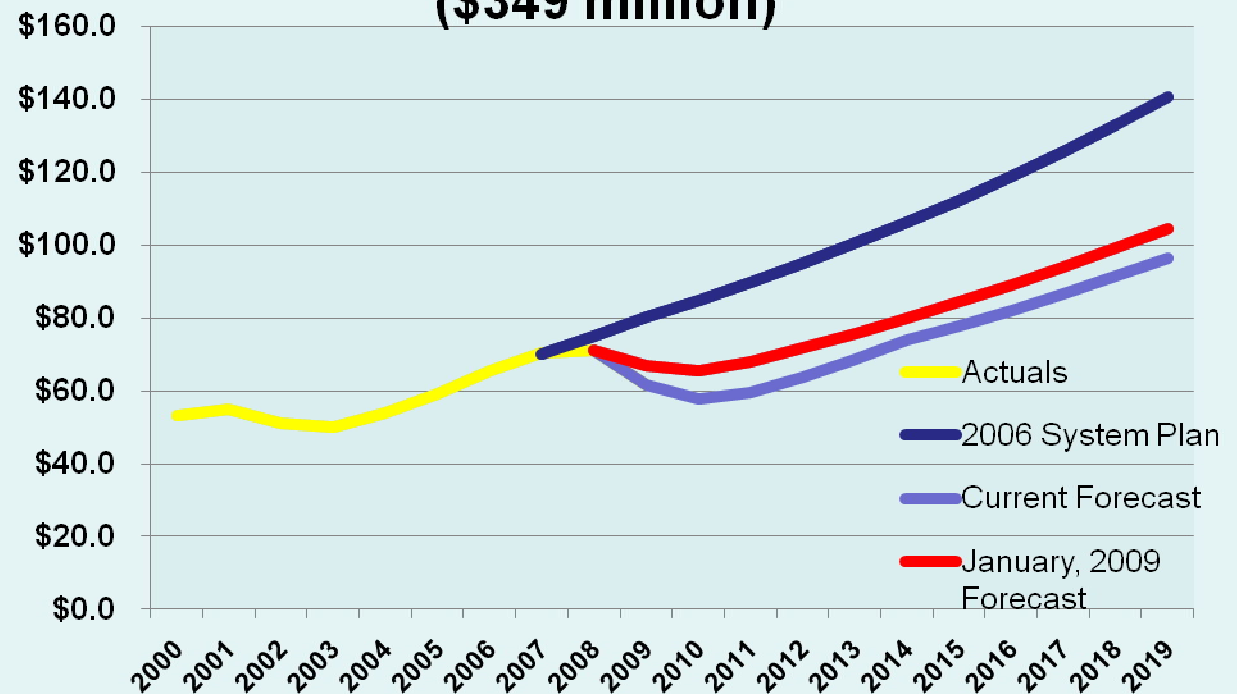
- **LYNX Blue Line (LRT)**
  - FTA considers very successful
  - Needs capacity for 3-car trains
- **Blue Line Extension (LRT)**
  - Strong New Starts project
  - Funding schedule is now 2019
- **Red Line (Commuter Rail)**
  - Tracks & Crossings @ 90% design
  - No clear funding plan
- **Streetcar Line (Modern)**
  - City of Charlotte funding PE
  - No clear funding plan
- **Silver Line (LRT or BRT)**
  - Transit Technology Decision in 2011
  - Corridor Land Use and Road solution
- **West Corridor**
  - Enhanced Bus Service 2009
  - Convert to Streetcar



Approved by MTC November 2006

- 2006 Financial plan based on historic trends and consultation with financial experts
- Revenues
  - Projected FY09 \$74 million
  - Actual FY09 \$61.7million
  - Projected FY10 \$57 million
- Reduced Revenues create funding shortfall
- 2030 System Plan schedule no longer feasible

**Ten Year (2010-2019) Sales Tax Gap (\$349 million)**





## MTC Legislative Objectives

### Public Transit State-Wide:

- Secure NC General Assembly approval of an increase in the annual state Budget Appropriation for statewide Public Transit projects for:
  - Capital
  - Operating Assistance
  - New Starts

### Legislation / Appropriations:

- Secure NC General Assembly appropriation of state matching funds for the local funding share of:
  - North Corridor Red Line (HB 1005)
  - Northeast Blue Line Extension (New Starts)
- Authorize SFFGA in advance of Federal FFGA (NCBOT)
- Secure 50% of local share of all Federally funded projects





## MTC Legislative Objectives

### State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP):

- North Carolina Board of Transportation to amend the SMAP Policy to make Rail Transit eligible for operating assistance
- Increase NCDOT's budget appropriation for Transit Maintenance Assistance to sufficiently fund the amended SMAP policy and expand transit operations

### House Bill 148:

- Obtain Mecklenburg County Delegation support to amendment House Bill 148 for an additional ½ cent Local Option Transit Sales Tax for Mecklenburg County
- Obtain approval of the amendment of HB 148 by the NC General Assembly



*Photo by JoAnn Sieburg-Baker*